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AUTHOR(S):

IUCHI, Maho

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The Bka' gdams chos 'byung Genre and the Newly Published Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung *

IUCHI Maho

Abstract: In recent years, many rare texts related to Bka' gdams pa school have arrived from Lhasa, such as the collection of 'Bras spungs Monastery, and they have been become available to scholars. Among these rare texts, one Bka' gdams chos 'byung (history of Bka' gdams pa school) text, which was not accessible for a long time, was published by the Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (henceforth, Ser gtsug Institute), Lhasa in 2015. The newly published, *Bka' gdams rin po che'i bstan 'dzin rnams kyi byung khungs paṇ chen ye shes rtse mos mdzad pa* [*The origin of the holders of the precious teachings of Bka' gdams written by Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo*] (henceforth, *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*) written by Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo (1433-?), who was the forth abbot of Bkra shis lhun po Monastery, is thought to be the earliest Bka' gdams chos 'byung work along with the same genre work by Bsod nams lha'i dbang po (1423-1496). This paper will give an overview of the Bka' gdams chos 'byung genre and the details of *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*, such as the context, author, date of the text, and specific descriptions of the text with compared to other Bka' gdams chos 'byung works.

关键词：藏传佛教，西藏历史，佛教史，噶当派，益西孜莫

Keywords : Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetan history, Chos 'byung, Bka' gdams pa, Ye shes rtse mo

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1 Introduction

Bka' gdams chos 'byung is a genre of Tibetan historical and biographical literature on the origin of the doctrine of Bka' gdams pa school, which was founded by 'Brom ston pa (1005–1064) under the doctrine of Atiśa (982–1054) in the 11th century. In 2015, the *Bka' gdams rin po che'i bstan 'dzin rnams kyi byung khungs paṇ chen ye shes rtse mos mdzad pa* [*The origin of the holders of the precious teachings of Bka' gdams written by Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo*] (henceforth, *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*) written by Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo (1433–?), who was the forth abbot of Bkra shis lhun po Monastery, was published by the Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (henceforth, Ser gtsug Institute) as Volume 489 of the series¹, *Gangs can nor dpe tshogs* [*The collection of the jewel of the snow land*]². Until this recent publication, the existence of the text was only known via the MHTL (no.10849), but the text itself was unavailable for a long time. The great scholar of the 20th century, Dung dkar rin po che (1927–1997) also mentions on the text as a Bka' gdams chos 'byung in his work³.

The text published by the Ser gtsug Institute is an inputted edition in a 51-page book. It does not include a facsimile of the manuscript. Therefore, we do not know the condition of the manuscript itself⁴. In addition, there is no information in the preface of the book about where the manuscript is. However, the text is not included in the catalogue published by the Dpal brtsegs Institute in 2004, which is a catalogue of the rare collection of 'Bras spung Monastery, Lhasa⁵. Therefore, we can assume that it is from the other collection, such as Potala Palace or Nor bu gling kha, which are not from the collection of 'Bras

¹ Ser gtsug Institute is a collaborated institute of Se ra Monastery and Gtsug lag khang for collecting Tibetan rare texts. The institute's publication is sold at the adjoining bookstore of Se ra Monastery.

² The book was published without an ISBN number. Also, there is no mention of information such as the year of publication in the book. Basically, the publisher staff input the rare text by themselves in their office close to Se ra Monastery and sells the books in pulisher's store inside of the monastery.

³ Dun dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las (2002: 164–165).

⁴ The editor of the book input the folio number in parentheses. According to it, the manuscript has 17 folios.

⁵ Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (2004).

spung Monastery⁶.

In this paper, I give an overview of the newly published *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* and considers the specific description of the text.

2 The Bka' gdams chos 'byung

At present, the following six works of Bka' gdams chos 'byung, including the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*, are available. The following is the list of Bka' gdams chos 'byung works chronologically by year⁷:

- 1) Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo, *Bka' gdams rin po che'i bstan 'dzin rnam kyī byung khungs paṇ chen ye shes rtse mo's mdzad pa* (1484)
- 2) Bsod nams lha'i dbang po (1423–1496), *Bka' gdams rin po che'i chos 'byung rnam thar nyin mor byed pa'i 'od stong* (1484)
- 3) Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1432–1506), *Bka' gdams kyī rnam par thar pa chos 'byung gsal ba'i sgron me* (1494)
- 4) Paṇ chen Bsod nams grags pa (1478–1554), *Bka' gdams gсар rnying gi chos 'byung yid kyī mdzes rgyan* (1529)
- 5) A myes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1662), *Dge ba'i bshes gnyen bka' gdams pa rnam kyī dam pa'i chos 'byung ba'i tshul legs par bshad pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* (1634)
- 6) Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–1793), *Lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (1787)

Generally, the structure of Bka' gdams chos 'byung works is as follows:

- 1) overview of Buddhism in India, 2) overview of Buddhism in Tibet, 3)

⁶ According to the website, China Tibet Online, ("ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdud phyogs sgrig khang gi sku zhabs kun dga' lags la bcar 'dri zhus pa'i skor bkod pa [an interview with Mr. Kun dga' of the Ser gtsug Institute] " 11.7.2011, http://tb.tibet.cn/2010zj/xw/201111/t20111107_1153491.htm), the office was established by Se ra theg chen gling and Gtsug lag khang in 2007. They are publishing an input text and facsimile edition of the rare manuscript from mostly Potala Palace as a series, *Gangs can nor dpe tshogs*. So, the manuscript might be from Potala Palace.

⁷ Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las (2002: 164–165) mentions the *Dbus pa blo gsal gyi chos 'byung* (MHTL no.10845) by Dbus pa blo gsal (b. 13th c.) as a Bka' gdams chos 'byung work. For the works of Bka' gdams chos 'byung, see Roesler (2008: 396) and Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: 16).

Atiśa's biography, 4) 'Brom ston pa's biography, 5) other Bka' gdams pa masters' biographies, and 6) Dge lugs pa masters' biographies. The Bka' gdams chos 'byung works were written after the rise of the Dge lugs pa school, after the 15th century. All the works included the biographies of Dge lugs pa masters⁸. A Japanese scholar, Hakuyu Hadano (1911–1985), Tohoku University, who can be said to have been a pioneer of Bka' gdams pa study, pointed out that it is thought that the main purpose of the authors of the Bka' gdams chos 'byung works is to emphasize the importance of Dge lugs pa school as a successor of Bka' gdams pa school⁹.

Among Bka' gdams chos 'byung works, the works by Ye shes rtse mo, Las chen, Amyes zhabs, and Ye shes rgyal mtshan are somewhat biographical. These four texts have very similar structures. They include the biography of each master in order. On the other hand, the works by Lha'i dbang po and Bsod nams grags pa are not biographical. The two texts also give biographies of masters, but they focus more on each subject and textual lineage and write each of them in order¹⁰.

Among Bka' gdams chos 'byung works, it is thought that the two early works by Lha'i dbang po and Las chen are especially important because the later works by Bsod nams grags pa, Amyes zhabs, and Ye shes rgyal mtshan were influenced by these two early works¹¹.

With regard to the *Lha'i dbang po's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*, the author, Bsod nams lha'i dbang po was the 23rd abbot of Lo Monastery, historic Bka'

⁸ The all authors of the Bka' gdams chos 'byung works were Dge lugs pa masters except a Bka' brgyud pa master, Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan and a Sa skya pa master, A myes zhabs. Paṇ chen Bsod nams grags pa was an abbot of 'Bras spungs Blo gsal gling. Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan was a preceptor of the eighth Dalai Lama 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1758–1804). Ye shes rtse mo, Bsod nams lha'i dbang po, and Las chen are mentioned later.

⁹ Hadano (1954: 47). Hadano (1954: 47) points out, "The Bka' gdams chos 'byung works by Dge lugs pa school emphasize that they are a straight successor because they consider Tsong kha pa (1357–1419) as the second Atiśa. They allege that both of Tsong kha pa and Atiśa were regenerator and restorer for the corruption and degradation in all spheres of Tibetan Buddhism".

¹⁰ These texts contain the textual lineage, such as *Bka' gdams gzhung drug* (The six works of Bka' gdams pa school), *Jo bo'i chos chung brgya rtse* (The collected works of Atiśa), *Bka' gdams glegs bam*, *Lam rim*, etc. For these texts, see Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: 52, 54, 55, 60–62).

¹¹ A myes zhabs mentions that he used the *Bsod nams lha'i dbang po's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* as a reference. *A myes zhabs's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*: 189–190. Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: n.23).

gdams Monastery founded by Spyang snga pa Tshul khribs 'bar (1038–1103), who was a disciple of 'Brom ston pa, in 1095¹². There are two publications from one manuscript, a dbu med hand-written manuscript with 94 folios¹³. One is from Gantok in 1977 as the *Two Histories of the Bka' gdams pa Tradition from the Library of Burmiki Athing*, and the other one was published in the *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs*, Set.1, Vol.4, by the Dpal brtsegs Institute in 2010.

Then, with regard to the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* written by Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan from Rtsed thang Monastery, Lho kha¹⁴, there are four publications from one block print¹⁵. According to the colophon of the text, the wood block was established by the order of the fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682)¹⁶. Hadano studied this text quite early because the block print was kept at the library of Tohoku University (Toh.7038), having been brought by Tokan Tada (1890–1967) in the early 20th century¹⁷. Hadano pointed out the similarities between Las chen's work and the section of the Bka' gdams history in the *Deb ther sngon po*, and he also pointed out a master-disciple relationship between 'Gos Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481) and Las chen¹⁸. He translated the Bka' gdams history in the *Deb ther sngon po* into Japanese, and he laid the basis of Bka' gdams pa study¹⁹. Hadano (1954: 50) described the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* as follows²⁰:

¹² For details on Bsod nams lha'i dbang po and his life time, see *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*: 207b1–208a5 and Vetturini (2007: 41–53). Also, for Lo Monastery and its abbatial succession, see Iuchi (2010).

¹³ For this text, there is a critical text and index of the text, Vetturini (2007: part 2).

¹⁴ Rtsed [Rtses] thang Monastery was founded by Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302–1364) of Phag mo gru school. Hadano (1954: 52–53) describes that Rtsed thang Monastery appeared under the hegemony of Bka' brgyud pa school within the context of history, flourished as one of centers of Tibetan Buddhism along with Gsang phu ne' thog at that time, gathered many students, and produced many scholars. Then, the monastery interacted with Bka' gdams pa school and Dge lugs pa school, such as Snar thang, Bkra shis lhun po, Dga' ldan, and Se ra.

¹⁵ See Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: 17).

¹⁶ *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*: f.417a5–6. Also see, Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: 17), Iuchi (2016: n.6).

¹⁷ See Kanakura (1953: Preface).

¹⁸ Hadano (1954: 53–54). Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: n.16).

¹⁹ Hadano (1954: 70–175) is a Japanese translation of the chapter Five (*ca*), *jo bo rje brgyud dang bcas pa'i skabs* of the *Deb ther sngon po*. Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: 15).

²⁰ Similarly, Roesler (2008: 397) also brings up the same point.

Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung is the best historical text on the Bka' gdams pa school which can respond to our request, because it is a comprehensive, systematical, and detailed instruction on the school.

3 Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung

3.1 Contents of the text

The *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* is divided into four parts: history of Atiśa, history of Bka' gdams pa masters, history of Rwa sgren Monastery, and history of Snar thang Monastery. Basically, the contents are very similar to those of other biographical Bka' gdams chos 'byung, such as the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*. The contents are as the follows²¹:

1. Introduction 1
2. The history of Atiśa 1–12
3. Biography of Bka' gdams pa masters 12–37
 - 3-1. The history of Dge bshes Ston pa and his disciples 12–15
 - 3-2. Po to ba Rin chen gsal (1027–1105) 16–18
 - 3-3. Spyān snga pa Tshul khriṃs 'bar 18–19
 - 3-4. Phu chung pa Gzhon nu 'od (1031–1103) 19–20
 - 3-5. Sku mched gsum as an incarnation of Rigs gsum mgon po 20–21
 - 3-6. Rnal 'byor pa chen po Byang chub rin chen 21
 - 3-7. Rnal 'byor pa chen po Dgon pa ba Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan (1016–1082) and his disciples 21–22
 - 3-8. Ka pa Shākya dbang phyug (b.11c.) 22
 - 3-9. Khu ston chen po Brtson 'grus g.yung drung (1011–1075) 22–23
 - 3-10. Gsang phu ba chen po Legs pa'i shes rab (b.10c.) and his disciples 22–23
 - 3-11. Khmas pa lung pa Shākya yon tan (1025–1115) 23
 - 3-12. Sha ra ba Yon tan grags (1070–1141) and his disciples 24

²¹ Among the Bka' gdams pa masters, 14 masters, 3–32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 47, 49, and 50, in the following list could not be confirmed in the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*.

- 3-13. Glang ri thang pa Rdo rje seng ge (1054–1123) and his disciples 25
- 3-14. 'Chad kha ba chen po (1101–1175) and his disciples 25–26
- 3-15. Se spyil bu pa (1121–1189) and his disciples 26–27
- 3-16. Bya yul ba Gzhon nu 'od (1075–1138) and his disciples 27–28
- 3-17. Sangs rgyas dbon Gzhon nu grags (b.11c.?) 28
- 3-18. Great eight disciples of Bya yul ba 28–29
- 3-19. Disciples of Glang thang pa 29
- 3-20. Ka ma pa Shes rab 'od (1057–1131) and his disciples 29–30
- 3-21. Smyug rum pa Brtson 'grus 'bar (b.11c.?) and his disciples 30
- 3-22. Sne'u zur pa Ye shes 'bar (1042–1118) and his disciples 30–31
- 3-23. Stod lung Rin chen snying po (1032–1116) 31
- 3-24. Zhang ston Dar ma grags (b.11c.?) and his disciples 31–33
- 3-25. Four disciples of Btab ka ba chen po (b.11c.?) 33
- 3-26. Dgon 'od 'jo ba (?–1229?) 33
- 3-27. Zhang ston Dar ma g.yung drung (b.11c.?) 33
- 3-28. KaM kaM pa Khrom gzhir chen po (b.11c.?) 33
- 3-29. Dol pa Shes rab rgya mtsho (1059–1131) 33–34
- 3-30. Pho brang sdings pa Gzhon nu 'od (b.11c.?) 34
- 3-31. Sdings pa Shes rab rgya mtsho (b.10c.?) 34
- 3-32. Pha bong kha pa Byang chub brtson 'grus 34
- 3-33. Lung smad pa Dbang phyug ye shes 34
- 3-34. Mchod gnas Gzhon nu brtson 'grus 34
- 3-35. Brag dkar ba (1032–1111) 34–35
- 3-36. Dge bshes Gtsang pa rdo rje 35
- 3-37. Khar phu ba Gzhon nu smon lam 35
- 3-38. Dge bshes Rgya 35
- 3-39. Dge bshes Sgang phrug pa Dbang phyug ye shes 35
- 3-40. Dge bshes Se gseb pa Rin byang 35
- 3-41. Brag gseb pa Sher 'byung 35–36
- 3-42. Dge bshes Ri pa Sher 'bum 36
- 3-43. Disciples of Snang dre'u lhas pa (b.10c.?) 36
- 3-44. Disciples of Mkhar phu ba (b.10c.?) 36

- 3-45. Disciples of Lhab ston 36
- 3-46. Disciples of Sdings ma (b.10c.?) 36
- 3-47. Disciples of Mtha' bzhi 36
- 3-48. Disciples of Zar pa (b.10c.?) 36
- 3-49. Disciples of Rgya bug pa can 37
- 3-50. Disciples of Rdzi lung pa 'Od zer grags 37
- 4. History and abbot of Rwa sgren Monastery 37–41
- 5. History and abbot of Snar thang Monastery 41–50
 - 5-1. Gtum ston blo gros grags (1106–1166) 41
 - 5-2. Rdo ston Shes rab grags (1128–1187) 41–42
 - 5-3. Zhang btsun chen po Rdo rje 'od zer (1122–1194) 42
 - 5-4. Gro bdud rtsi grags (1153–1232) 42
 - 5-5. Zhang ston Chos kyi bla ma (1184?–1241) 42
 - 5-6. Sgom pa Seng ge skyabs (1179–1250) 42
 - 5-7. Mchims thams cad mkhyen pa Nam mkha' grags (1210–1285?) 43
 - 5-8. Skyo ston Smon lam tshul khriims (1219–1299) 43
 - 5-9. Chos rje Nyi ma rgyal mtshan (1225–1305) 43
 - 5-10. Quotation from [*Bka' gdams*] *Glegs bam* 43–44
 - 5-11. Abbots of Snar thang Monastery from Ze'u 'bru Grags pa shes rab (b.13c.) to 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgyal mtshan (b.13c.) 45
 - 5-12. Prophecies of Dga' ldan Monastery 45–46
 - 5-13. Rje rin po che Blo bzang grags pa (Tsong kha pa) 46
 - 5-14. Transmission of *Glegs bam* 46–50
 - 5-14-1. Btab dka' ba Byang chub bzang po (b.13c.?) 47
 - 5-14-2. 'Brom Ku ma ra ma ti (b.13c.) 47–48
 - 5-14-3. Dge 'dun grub pa (1391–1474) 48–50
- 6. Conclusion 50
- 7. Colophon 50–51

The *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* gives the individual short biographies from 'Brom ston pa to the Dge lugs pa master, the first Dalai Lama Dge 'dun grub pa, who was the founder of Bkra shis lhun po Monastery²². The last part of the text (5–14) describes the transmission of the *Bka' gdams glegs*

bam from Atiśa to Dge 'dun grub pa in detail²³. As mentioned above, the authour, Ye shes rtse mo is from Bkra shis lhun po Monastery, so it is thought that his pourpose in writing the text was to show the lineage of Dge 'dun grub pa and Bkra shis lhun po Monastery, which could trace its lineage back to Bka' gdams pa school.

3.2 The author and the date of the text

With regard to the author of the text, Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo, according to the *Ye shes rtse mo's biography* written by the second Dalai Lama Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1476–1542), which included with the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* published by the Ser gtsug Institute, Ye shes rtse mo was born in Bde chen of Srad²⁴, Gtsang area in the water-female-ox year, 1433. At the age of 13, he was ordained in Mkhar chen brag²⁵. He stayed there until the age of 15, and he studied the Tantric mandala rituals, such as Kālacakra, Sgrol ma nyer gcig, Hevajra, Cakrasaṃvara, and the Tantric practices of the Sa skya tradition²⁶. He was fully ordained at Snar thang Monastery in 1462. He came to Bkra shis lhun po Monastery as the fourth Throne Holder (*khri*) in 1487 and served for 26 years, from 1487 to 1512²⁷.

With regard to the date of the text, the year, wood-dragon, 1484, which is thought of as the year of its writing, appeared several times in the text itself. It appears as "the present, wood-dragon year (*da lta'i shing 'brug*)²⁸" and

²² The biographies mostly note just about the year of the birth and death, birth place, and the related monastery of the master. Similarly, compared with the other biographical Bka' gdams chos 'byung, the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* gives the biographies of about 177 Bka' gdams pa masters and 50 Dge lugs pa masters. Also, *Ye shes rgyal mtshan's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* contains the biographies of about 23 Bka' gdams pa masters and 42 Dge lugs pa masters.

²³ *Bka' gdams glegs bam* has two parts, *pha chos* [father teachings] and *bu chos* [son teachings]. *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*: 14a3-5 explains that the *Pha chos* is a teaching of Atiśa that 'Brom ston pa received and the *Bu chos* is a teaching of Atiśa that 'Brom ston pa's disciples, Rngog Legs pa'i shes rab and Khu ston received. Iuchi and Yoshimizu (2011: 62). Also see Thupten Jinpa (2008: Introduction).

²⁴ Sras is the area located in the south of Zhis ka rtse. See Hazod (2009: 171, map 3). Bde chen of Sras is located in the present day La lho shang. Dr. Shar rgan Dbang 'dus, a researcher of Cultural Relics Conservation Institute of Tibetan Autonomous region, Lhasa, kindly taught me the exact place.

²⁵ According to Dr. Shar rgan Dbang 'dus, Mkhar chen brag is located in the north of Bde chen, the birth place of Ye shes rtse mo.

²⁶ *Ye shes rtse mo's Biography*: 58–59.

²⁷ *Ye shes rtse mo's Biography*: 130–131.

”nowdays, wood-dragon year (*ding* [*deng*] *sang shing ’brug*)”²⁹. The following is one passage of the text from the conclusion³⁰:

*Jo bo rje Lha gcig ’jig rten du byon nas bka’ gdams zhes pa’i tha snyad ’di byung
lal/ de na deng sang gi shing ’brug gi bar la lo lnga brgya dang gsum song ba yin
no//*

Since Jo bo rje lha gcig (Atiśa) appeared in the world (982) and the term, *bka’ gdams*, was formed, more than 503 years have passed until the present day, wood-dragon year (1484).

So, it is thought that the date of the text is 1484. Interestingly, 1484 is the same year *Lha’i dbang po’s Bka’ gdams chos ’byung* was written. The colophon of the *Lha’i dbang po’s Bka’ gdams chos ’byung*: 93b7-8 states as the following:

*Shākya dge slong bsod nams lha’i dbang pos kro mo zhes pa shing pho ’brug gi lol
mngon par byang chub pa’i zla ba yar ngo’i tshes bcu la grub pa’i gnas mchog
dpal ldan lo dgon pa’i dben gnas dga’ ldan rtser sbyar ba’o//*

Shākya dge slong Bsod nams lha’i dbang po composed it on the tenth day of the enlightened half of the month, the wood-male-dragon year (1484), in the hermitage of Dga’ ldan rtse of Lo Monastery

4 Specific descriptions of the text

4.1 Abbatial succession of Rwa sgren Monastery

The *Ye shes rtse mo’s Bka’ gdams chos ’byung* lists the abbatial succession of two famous Bka’ gdams pa monasteries, Rwa sgren Monastery and Snar thang Monastery³¹. With regard to the abbatial succession of Snar thang

²⁸ *Ye shes rtse mo’s Bka’ gdams chos ’byung*: 8, 11.

²⁹ *Ye shes rtse mo’s Bka’ gdams chos ’byung*: 40, 45, 46, 50.

³⁰ *Ye shes rtse mo’s Bka’ gdams chos ’byung*: 50.

³¹ *Ye shes rtse mo’s Bka’ gdams chos ’byung*: 37–50.

Monastery, the text lists the abbots from the founder of the monastery, Gtun ston Blo gros grags to the 13th abbot, Gro ston Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1338–1400/ 01). The description of the abbots of Snar thang Monastery is similar to those in other sources. On the other hand, with regard to the abbatial succession of Rwa sgren Monastery, however, there are differences between the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* and other works. Ye shes rtse mo states the abbatial succession of Rwa sgren Monastery from Dge bshes ston pa to Mkhan po Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan, who was probably a master in the 13th century, as the 15th abbot. Compared with the other Bka' gdams chos 'byung works by Lha'i dbang po and Bsod nams grags pa, it does not mention the succession after the seventh abbot, Dgon 'od 'jo ba. In the similar, the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* mentions Mkhan po Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan as the sixth abbot. The *Deb ther sngon po* also gives the abbatial succession of Rwa sgren Monastery³², but the information is quite different from that in the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* (See Table 1 below).

Interestingly, the description of the abbatial succession of Rwa sgren Monastery of the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* is quite similar to that in the newly published, the history of Rwa sgren Monastery, the *Rgyal ba'i dben gnas rwa sgren gi bshad pa nyi ma'i 'od zer* [henceforce, *Rwa sgren nyi ma'i 'od zer*] (*Rays of the Sun: A statement about Rwa sgren Monastery, Hermitage of the Victor*), written by 'Brom Shes rab me lce in 1299³³. The manuscript of this text is from the collection of the fifth Dalai Lama, 'Bras spungs Monastery and was published by Dpal brtsegs Institute in 2010³⁴. Here is a comparison of the description of the abbatial succession of Rwa sgren Monastery in the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*, the *Rwa sgren nyi ma'i 'od zer*, and other Bka' gdams chos 'byung works. As we can see in Table 2, the descriptions of two texts, the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* and the *Rwa sgren nyi ma'i 'od zer*, are similar, although there are differences with the early Bka' gdams chos 'byung works.

³² *Deb ther sngon po: ca.*, 12a2-13a3 and Hadano (1954: 95–97).

³³ Iuchi (2016).

³⁴ Iuchi (2016: 3–6).

[Table 1]

	<i>Ye shes rtse mo's Bka'gdams chos 'byung</i> (1484)	<i>Lha'i dbang po</i> (1484)	<i>Las chen</i> (1494)	<i>Deb der sngon po</i> (1478)
1	Dge bshes Ston pa	1	1	1
2	Rnal 'byor pa chen po Byang chub rin chen (1015-1078)	2	2	2
3	Dgon pa ba Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan	3	3	3
4	Po to ba	4	4	4
5	Dge bshes Btab dka' ba chen po (?-1150)	5 Zhang 'od 'jo ba	5 Zhang 'od 'jo ba	5 Zhang 'od 'jo ba
6	Dge bshes Sgang thang dkar ba (?-1173?)	6		
7	Dgon 'od 'jo ba (?-1229?)	7		
8	Rgya 'dul 'dzin pa			
9	Slob dpon Jo gdan gtsang pa			
10	Ko khyim pa (b.11c./ 12c.)			
11	Slob dpon Snar thang pa			
12	Mkhan po Gur ston			6
13	unknown abbot			7 Rma ston
14	unknown abbot			8 Mkhan po Shes rab skor ba
15	Mkhan po Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan (13 c.)		6	9 'Dul ba 'dzin pa
				10 Mkhan po 'Jam dbyangs

[Table 2]

	<i>Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung</i> (1484)	<i>Rwa sgren nyi ma'i 'od zer</i> (1299)
1	Dge bshes Ston pa	1
2	Rnal 'byor pa chen po Byang chub rin chen	2
3	Dgon pa ba Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan	3
4	Po to ba	4
5	Dge bshes Btab dka' ba chen po	5 Zhang 'od 'jo ba
6	Dge bshes Sgang thang dkar ba	
7	Dgon 'od 'jo ba	6
8	Rgya 'dul 'dzin pa	7
9	Slob dpon Jo gdan gtsang pa	8
10	Ko khyim pa	9
11	Slob dpon Snar thang pa	10
12	Mkhan po Gur ston	11 Slob dpon Sna ra ba (?–1283)
13	unknown abbot	
14	unknown abbot	
15	Mkhan po Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan	

4.2 Incident at Bka' gdams pa monasteries in the 13th century

According to several Tibetan sources, such as the *Deb ther sngon po* and the *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, we know that one serious incident happened involving the Mongolian army at two early Bka' gdams pa monasteries, Rgyal lha khang and Rwa sgren Monastery in 1240³⁵. For instance, the *Deb ther sngon po: kha*, 13a1 says³⁶,

*lcags pho byi ba la hor dmag bod du lhags/ lha khang mes bsregs/ btsun pa so ston
gyis thog drangs skya ser lnga brgya tsam bsad/*

³⁵ Lha khang, which the *Deb ther sngon po* mentions, is Rgyal lha khang, which was founded by Zhang Sna nams rdo rje (976–1060), a teacher of 'Brom ston pa, in 'Phan yul area. Also, Rwa sgren monastery, known as a mother Monastery of Bka' gdams pa school, was founded by 'Brom ston pa in 1057. There are some studies on the Mongol conquest to Tibet: see Wylie (1977), Petech (1990), and Haw (2014).

³⁶ Also see, Roerich (1949: 91).

In the iron-male-bird year (1240), the Mongolian army arrived in Tibet. Lha khang was burnt. About five hundred monks and laypersons, headed by the monk So ston, were killed [by an army].

In addition, the *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*: 1416 says³⁷,

*jing gi lo nga dgu pa lcags byi la byang ngos go dan gyi sa nas dor tog gis dmag
dpon byas pa'i hor dmag dang po bod du lhags te o rgyan rin po ches/ mdo stod
mdo smad sog chu ra sgrenng sogs// zhib par mi 'chad skyo ba skye ba'i rgyu// zhes
lung bstan pa'i mdo stod smad sog chu kha rnams su mi mthong gsod byas/ ra
sgrenng du gnod pa chen po byas/ stag lung smugs pas g.yogs te ma mthong/ rgyal
lha khang bsregs/ btsun pa so ston sogs rab byung lnga brgya bsad/*

At the age of 59 of Genghis [Khan] (reign 1206–1227), in the iron-bird year (1240), from the north place of Köden, the Mongolian army headed by Dor tog first reached Tibet³⁸. As O rgyan rin po che (Padmasaṃbhava) prophesied, [I] don't comment on Mdo stod, Mdo smad, Sog chu, and Ra sgrenng. That is deplorable"³⁹, [the Mongolian army] killed everybody in sight in Mdo stod smad and Sog chu kha. They did great damage to Rwa sgrenng. They didn't see Stag lung⁴⁰ because it was covered by fog [at that time]. They killed five hundred ordained monks such as the monk So ston.

However, interestingly, none of Bka' gdams chos 'byung works mention about this serious incident that happened to Rgyal lha khang and Rwa sgrenng Monastery. Instead, only the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* states that a fire was happened in Rwa sgrenng Monastery in the iron-male-tiger year, 1230⁴¹,

³⁷ Also see, *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*: 474 and Petech (1990: 7, n.8).

³⁸ On the Dor tog or Dorda, see Petech (1990: 7, n.8).

³⁹ *Pad ma bka' thang shel brag ma*: 271b3 says, *lcags pho khyi la hor dmag bod du 'ong/ mdo stod mdo smad sog chu ra sgrenng sogs/ zhib par mi bkod skyo ba skye ba'i rgyu/*.

⁴⁰ Stag lung Monastery is located on the way to Rwa sgren Monastery, which was founded by Stag lung thang pa Bkra shis dpal (1142–1209/ 1210) in 1180. *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma*: 65b3-5 and Tucci (1971: 201).

⁴¹ *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*: 40.

*lcags pho stag gi lo la gdan sa ba mkhan po sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan gyi dus su
dbu rtse rin po che la me byung/ de'i tshe phu chung ba'i sku'i sprul par grags pa'i
rwa sgrengr ba'i bla ma 'jam dbyangs pa bya bas dbu rtse rin po che la zhig gsos
byas/*

In the iron-male-tiger year (1230), at the time of Mkhan po Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan, the fire broke out at the Dbu rtse rin po che (the main building of Rwa sgrengr Monastery). At that time, a monk of Rwa sgrengr, 'Jam dbyangs pa known as an incarnation of Phu chung ba, restored it.

In contrast, the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* states⁴²:

*Mkhan chen Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan gyis gdan sa lo nyi shu rtse lnga mdzad/
dge 'dun yang sum brgya tsam du 'phel/*

Mkhan chen Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan was an abbot for 25 years. The monks had increased to about three hundred.

As seen above, the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* does not mention either the Mongolian army or the fire in 1230 that are described in the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*. In addition, the *Lha'i dbang po's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* does not mention anything about Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan.

Interestingly, as mentioned above, the *Rwa sgrengr nyi ma'i 'od zer*, which is a solely devoted to Rwa sgrengr Monastery written in 1299, just after 59 years after the incident⁴³, does not mention the episode described in the *Deb ther sngon po* in which Rwa sgrengr Monastery was burned by the Mongolian army. Pañ chen Bsod nams grags pa, one of the authors of the Bka' gdams chos 'byung, he also wrote the *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* in 1538. He does not mention on the incident in 1240 in his Bka' gdams chos 'byung work. However, he mentions on the incident in the *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* as the follows, and he notes that attention should be paid to the description⁴⁴:

⁴² *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*: 209b2.

⁴³ For the date of the *Rwa sgrengr nyi ma'i 'od zer*, see Iuchi (2016: 7).

⁴⁴ *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma*: 48b2-3 and Tucci (1971: 181).

*ra sgrenḡ dang rgyal lha khang du dge 'dun mang po skrongḡ [dgrongḡ] pa yin
zhes deb sngon las 'byung yang ra sgrenḡ la khungḡ gzhan gsal ba ma mthong bas
btag [brtag] go*

In Ra sgrenḡ and in Rgyal lha khang many monks were killed; so it is written in the *Deb sngon* (*Deb ther sngon po*), but since this fact is not seen to be clearly attributed to Ra sgrenḡ by other sources, it should be properly pondered.

5 Conclusion

The newly published Bka' gdams chos 'byung, the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*, was the earliest Bka' gdams chos 'byung; it was written in 1484 along with the *Lha'i dbang po's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*. As shown by the description of the abbatial succession of Rwa sgrenḡ Monastery and the incident at Bka' gdams pa monasteries in the 13th century compared with those in the early Bka' gdams chos 'byung works, *Ye shes rtse mo*, *Lha'i dbang po*, and *Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan*, it seems that these did not influence each other. Although the *Las chen's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* was written 10 years after the other two texts, *Las chen* does not mention the works by *Ye shes rtse mo* and *Lha'i dbang po*. Moreover, *Las chen* states the biography of *Ye shes rtse mo* and *Lha'i dbang po*, but he does not mention the existence of their Bka' gdams chos 'byung works.

Bka' gdams chos 'byung is a later literature for the Bka' gdams pa period because these works were written after the 15th century. However, it is still the most important source for the Bka' gdams history from the 11th century and 14th century. Because more Bka' gdams pa texts are currently coming from the Potala Palace and 'Bras spungḡ Monastery, such as the *Ye shes rtse mo's Bka' gdams chos 'byung* and the *Rwa sgrenḡ nyi ma'i 'od 'zer*, the Bka' gdams chos 'byung works together with these new sources can be expected to help clarify the history of the Bka' gdams pa period.

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbreviations and Primary Sources

- A myes zhabs's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*=A myes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1662). *Dge ba'i bshes gnyen bka' gdams pa rnam kyi dam pa'i chos 'byung ba'i tshul legs par bshad pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*. Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang. 1995.
- Bsod nams lha'i dbang po's Bka' gdams chos 'byung*=Bsod nams lha'i dbang po (1423–1496). *Bka' gdams rin po che'i chos 'byung rnam thar nyin mor byed pa'i 'od stong*. In Dpal brtsegs bod kyi dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (ed.). *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs*. 1–4. Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang. 2010: 1–187.
- Deb ther dmar po gsar ma*=Pan chen Bsod nams grags pa (1478–1554). *Rgyal rabs 'phrul gyi lde mig gam deb ther dmar po gsar ma*. In G. Tucci. *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma: Tibetan Chronicles by Bsod nams grags pa, vol.1: Tibetan text, Emendations to the Text, English Translation and an Appendix containing two Minor Chronicles*. Roma: IsMEO. 1971: 1–103.
- Deb ther sngon po*=Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481). *Deb ther sngon po: The Blue Annals* (Śata-Piṭaka Series 212). New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture. 1974.
- MHTL=A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho (1803–1875). *Dpe rgyun dkon pa 'ga' zhig gi tho yig: Materials for a History of Tibetan Literature*. Part 3 (Śata-Piṭaka Series 30). New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture. 1963: 503–601 (Reprint Kyoto: Rinsen, 1981).
- Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*=Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba Mi pham chos kyi rgya mtsho (1504–1564/ 1566). *Dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor lo bsgyur ba rnam kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston*. Vols. 2. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang. 1986.
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- dpe skrun khang. 2010: 1–833.
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- Rwa sgreng nyi ma'i 'od zer*=Brom Shes rab me lce (13th–14th c.). *Rgyal ba'i dben gnas rwa sgreng gi bshad pa nyi ma'i 'od zer*. In Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (ed.). *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs*. 1–11. Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang. 2010: 233–295.
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- Ye shes rtse mo's biography*=The second Dalai Lama Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1476–1542). *Dpal ldan bla ma dam pa'i rnam par thar pa nor bu'i do shal*. In Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (ed.). *Paṇ chen ye shes rtse mo'i bka' gdams chos 'byung dang rnam thar* (Gangs chen khyad nor dpe tshogs 489). Lhasa: Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang. 2015: 52–136.

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井内 真帆 (いうち まほ)

神戸市外国語大学 (客員研究員), 青海民族大学宗喀巴研究院 (客座研究員)

Visiting Scholar at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies;

Tsongkhapa Research Institute, Qinghai Nationalities University.

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